ODE

TO THE

WARLIKE GENIUS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

By the REV. W. TASKER, A. B.

DEDICATED TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD AMHERST.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JEFFERY,
LORD AMHERST,

BARON AMHERST,

OF HOLMES-DALE, IN KENT,

KNIGHT OF THE BATH,

GENERAL OF HIS MAJESTY's FORCES,

LIEUTENANT GENERAL OF THE ORDNANCE,

GOVERNOR OF THE ISLAND OF GUERNSEY,

COLONEL OF THE THIRD REGIMENT OF FOOT,

COLONEL IN CHIEF OF THE ROYAL AMERICAN REGIMENT OF FOOT;

AND

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL.

THE FOLLOWING POEM,

IS HUMBLY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

---- Bellum, O terra hospita! portas:
Bello armantur equi, bellum hæc armenta minantur,

VIRG. ÆNEID. III.

Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies;
Now thrive the armourers; and honour's thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.

SHAKESPEARE.

A N

O D E

TO THE

WARLIKE GENIUS of GREAT BRITAIN.

I.

IMMORTAL Power! to whom by Heaven,
The care of Britain's warlike iſle is given:
Whether thou ſport'ſt upon the waves;
While round her cliffs old Ocean raves,
Whether thou guid'ſt the ſtorm of night,
Or rul'ſt the lightening's rapid flight.

N. B. This Ode refers to the different situations of the several encampments in the summer of 1788, when the first Edition was published.

Behind thee fear and dire diſmay,
Before thy face while terrors fly,
Blackening with gloomy clouds the ſky,
And mark thy dreadful way.
What ſhall thy near approach withſtand?
(When Vengeance arms thy red right hand)
When, every wheel inſtinct with War,
Forth iſſues thy impetuous Car,
Which, whirling rapid thro' the ſkies,
(From motion kindling as it flies)
Like meteor, ſtreaming to the troubled air,
On angery pinions, fiery Dragons bear.

II.

Behold! with joy thy native Plains,
Where martial ſpirit proudly reigns,

Freedom

Freedom---Goddeſs heavenly bright
Again prepares for vigorous fight:
Muſe of Glory!---Clio ſing,
Let Freedom ſound from every ſtring,
And trace her birth from the great ſource of light.

III.

Genius of Britain! view the Plains
Where military Virtue reigns.
Pallid Fear her vain alarms
Idly ſpreads.---While Glory warms
Th' intrepid ſoul with her celeſtial charms,
The ſtandard rears, and calls to arms:
Ye ſons of Britain hear!
From her refulgent ſphere

Aloud

Aloud ſhe ſhouts,---and opes the bright abodes
Of Heroes, and of Demi-Gods:
On ſeats of burniſh'd gold,
Where Arthur---Alfred ſat of old;
---The great examples fire---
---To deathleſs deeds inſpire,---
The ſons of freedom riſe---they claim
Their birthright---the reward of fame:
They catch the flame and energy divine,
And from their poliſh'd arms, the ſun-beams brighter ſhine.

IV.

Gallia's pale Genius ſtands aghaſt,
(The Lillies wither in her hand)
Her Fleets receive the favouring blaſt,
But dare not ſeek the adverſe Land.

On

On England's rough and rocky ſhore,
She hears th' awaken'd Lion roar.

V.

Pindar! of boldeſt verſe the ſire!
Great maſter of the boundleſs lyre!
Teach me one ſound of thy immortal ſtring.
---Shakeſpeare!---one ſpark from thy bright Muſe of fire!
Bear me on her hiſtoric deathleſs wing,
While I Britannia's ancient heroes ſing,
Reveal paſt deeds---without a crime
Give me to look into the grave of time.
I look---before my eyes behold
With regal aſpect, and demeanor bold,
Warriors of ages paſt, and of ethereal mold.

VI.

Who yonder tow'rs with haughty ſtrides along,
Superior by the head to the admiring throng?
(A vanquiſh'd Monarch by his ſide appears,
Whoſe deep-felt woes the generous victor chears)
By ſable arms diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt,
The oſtrich-plumes high-nodding o'er his creſt;
Great Edward's Heir!---on Creſſy's plain renown'd!
With Gallic ſpoils and gorgeous trophies crown'd.---
Who yonder leans upon his ſhield?
And looks tow'rds Agincourt's enſanguin'd field,
(Where

A vanquiſh'd Monarch] The king of France, taken by the Black Prince, and detained ſome time priſoner by his father Edward III. in Windſor Caſtle.

Oſtrich-Plumes] The Oſtrich Feather was in the arms of the conquer'd king of Bohemia, and thence adopted by the victorious Prince of Wales.

Great Edward's heir] The Prince of Wales the heroic ſon of Edward III. ſurnamed the Black Prince, becauſe he wore black armour.

(Where Gallia's leaders preſs the ground
With countleſs thouſands ſtretch'd around)
Like Peleus' ſon, in arms divine,
Effulgent glories round him ſhine!
Henry! thy awful form is known,
And on thy laurel'd brow ſtill gleams the hoſtile Crown.

VII.

Like Shades of night, the viſion flies,
No more romantic ſcenes ariſe:
I wake from out the pleaſing dream,
And glad purſue the martial theme.
Genius of Britain! to thy office true,
On yonder heath the waving banners view;

Where

Peleus' Son] Achilles the ſon of Peleus, had a ſuit of armour made for him by Vulcan at the requeſt of Thetis. *Hom. Iliad.*

Henry!] Henry V. crown'd king of France.

On yonder heath] Cox-Heath.

Where Maidſtone's antient fabric ſtands,
And Medway's ſtreams refreſh the thirſty lands;
Britiſh ſpirit never droops:
Where late the foreign hireling troops,
A ſervile, mercenary band!
Diſgrac'd the ſtate, and ſham'd the land;
Now behold a native race
With freer ſtep, and bolder grace!
Thy Britain's offſpring glad ſurvey,
(Experienc'd Amherſt leads the way)
See! her heroic free-born chiefs advance,
And hurl defiance tow'rd perfidious France.
---To individual worth, Goddeſs, attend,
And Grafton view, the Soldier's Friend!

VIII.

Soldier's Friend.] His Grace the Duke of Grafton, was diſtinguiſhed by that amiable appellation.

VIII.

Is it Fancy's ſtrong controul
Which thus o'erſways my raptur'd ſoul?
Do mine eyes diſcern aright?
Or brilliant beauty overpower my ſight?
In martial veſt
By Venus and the Graces dreſt,
To yonder tent, who leads the way?
Art thou Britannia's Genius? ſay!
Or in the ſofter features of thy face
Trace we the likeneſs of the Malbro' race?
Hail! fair Devonia! hail!
Thy powerful charms prevail;
When Churchill's offſpring takes the field,
Ne'er ſhall the ſons of Britain yield.

Devonia) The Ducheſs of Devonſhire.

IX.

Muſe of Glory! raiſe the verſe
Churchill's matchleſs deeds rehearſe.
Paſt time returns, recall'd by you,
And Blenheim riſes to my view.
Like Mars himſelf, ſublime he ſtands,
And urges on the daring bands,
Like Mars, inſpir'd with Pallas' wiſer mind.—
Slaughter rages unconfin'd!
In vain the Gallic Squadrons ſtrive
To keep the fainting War alive.
The Houſe-hold troops retreat—they fly.
Victory lightens from his eye:
Deſperate they plunge into the Flood,
The raging Danube ſwells with Blood:

Grim

Grim Fate inwraps his deſtin'd prey,
And orphan'd thouſands weep that dreadful day,

X.

Hail! fair Devonia! hail!
Malbro's deſcendant ſhall prevail:
From time's firſt æra, to the preſent hour,
All Warriors own reſiſtleſs Beauty's power.
Fir'd by Helen's fatal charms,
Youthful Paris, ruſh'd to arms.
By Thais' artful ſmiles was won
Macedonia's conquering Son.
She rais'd his rage, or ſooth'd his ire:
To pleaſe the Dame,
He ſpread the Flame,
That wrapt the World's Metropolis in Fire.

If

If Thais thus the power poſſeſt
From Honour's path to turn the Conqueror's mind,
Do thou, bright Nymph, (in whoſe fair breaſt,
The nobler virtues dwell enſhrin'd,)
Employ the power the Gods to Beauty gave,
Exert thy chaſter energy to ſave.
What may not public Virtue do,
Approv'd, ſupported, chear'd by you?
Thy influence what withſtand?
'Mid blaze of Arms
Thy brighter Charms
Shall raiſe a Patriot Flame to ſave the Land.
Allied to Cavendiſh, the Spencer-Race
In thee ſhall gain a double grace:
Their

If Thais] Alexander in a drunken frolic (at the inſtigation of Thais, the celebrated Courtezan of Corinth) burnt Perſipolis, the moſt beautiful and magnificent city of the Eaſt.

Their mingled Honours deck his line,
And thou our tutelar Minerva ſhine.

XI.

Where yon tall Spire ſalutes the ſky,
Where Sarum's ſpacious Plains extend,
Before the gales, Equeſtrian enſigns fly,
And warlike Shouts the joyful Welkin rend.
Freedom's brave Sons, unknown to yield,
On generous courſers ſcour the field,
They burn with fierce delight,
Their injur'd Country's wrongs they feel,
Eager they ſnatch the gleamy Steel,
And fir'd by---Johnſon---wiſh th' avenging Fight.

Equeſtrian Enſigns] The Camp at Wilton on Saliſbury Plain, conſiſted entirely of horſe, commanded by General Johnſon.

XII.

What wonderous Ruin yonder ſtands?
A Pile, not rais'd by mortal hands,
Stone-Henge!---ſtupendous, antient frame!
Well know in days of early fame!
O Muſe! from thee what marvels ſpring?
The Muſe's work, the Muſe ſhall ſing.---
Beyond the date of Records old,
Bards attun'd their harps of gold;
The power of ſong was unconfin'd:
To prove its force, they all at once combin'd:
All ~~Albion's~~ Prydain's Bards aſſembled round,
(Their Brows with Oaken Garlands crown'd)
To try the power immenſe of conſecrated ſound:

With

Antient frame] It appears from the moſt authentic records, that Stonehenge was a Temple of the Druids, before the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity in this kingdom.

With rapturous Fire,
They ſtruck the Lyre:
With geſtures wild, and looks entranc'd,
Along the vale in magic ranks they danc'd.

XIII.

Give us (they ſung) great God of Light!
A glorious inſtance of thy might:
Some miracle impart,
To dignify the myſtic art:
Their voice the God propitious hears---
He ſtoops---he ſhakes the lofty Spheres---
---He viſibly deſcends.
Each mountain ſinks, each valley bends.
And rocks the ſolid earth:

With

Great God of Light] The Druids worſhipped the Sun.

With awe inſpir'd
The Bards retir'd,
When lo! a wond'rous birth!
With inſtantaneous bound
The rocks were pil'd around:
Fabric compleat---amazing---new!
Stone-Henge aroſe to their enraptur'd view,

XIV.

Sacred to Bards, and Druids' magic power
The Fane upſprang, in happy hour,
In time's remoter date:
To Sages old
And Chieftains bold,
An Oracle of State

To Bards the Gods decreed
To charm the martial throng,
To ſing the Warrior-ſong,
And form the Youth t'acquire bright Glory's meed.
Ev'n now (they ſay) what time at ſtill midnight
The Moon's mild beams the vales delight,
The ſimple Shepherds, think they hear
Sounds more than human in the air.
Stronger Fancy Reaſon warps;
Majeſtic forms of Druids riſe
In ſudden viſion to their eyes,
And tune their ſhadowy harps.

XV.

Since arms emblaze the fields---appear
Spectres more frequent in the air:

Arrang'd in order bright
Well pleas'd amid the tents to rove,
The Shades of mighty Heroes move
Cloth'd in the robes of night.
Inſpire the ſons of Mars in dreams,
And fire their Souls with warlike Themes.
Protracted ſleep they ſcorn.
From beds of Sloth upborn
Light and active as the Morn
Refreſh'd they riſe.
With winged Speed,
They mount the Steed,
And raiſe the Shout of Triumph to the Skies.

XVI.

XVI.

Britain's Genius! view well-pleas'd
The mighty Force, thy power hath rais'd.
Where ſainted Edmund ſleeps,
(O'er whoſe tomb oblivion creeps)
On the neighbouring martial land,
See Saville lead th' Eborean Band.
Hark! whence Warlike Shouts ariſe,
To yonder Common---turn thine ardent eyes,
Where the thund'ring Cannons make
The ſturdieſt Oaks of Brentwood ſhake!

Where

Where Edmund ſleeps] St. Edmundſbury, in the county of Suffolk.

Neighbouring Land] The camp in the neighbourhood of St. Edmundſbury.

Eborean Band] Yorkſhire, from Eboracum the Roman name for York.

Thund'ring Cannon] The camp of Warley Common, near Brentwood, Eſſex, remarkable for a fine Park of Artillery.

Look down once more---behold again---
On fam'd Wintonia's chalky Plain:
Where yonder Royal Ruin lies
And Gothic towers obſcurely riſe,
Where Plenty ſmiles, 'mid waving corn,
On fruitful meads luxuriant crops are born,
And fleecy flocks the neighbouring hills adorn.
Behold! conſpicuous in the line,
Where Dorſet, Rivers, Berkley, Paget ſhine!
Where Squadrons move in Armour bright:
With mingled Beauties pleaſe thy ſight,
A various proſpect, wide and far,
Riches of Peace and images of War!

XVII.

Royal Ruin] The ſhell of a Palace built by Charles II. on the ruins of an old Caſtle, once the ſeat of the Saxon Kings.

XVII.

(On yonder mountain's ſides,
Object illuſtrious, great and new!
The highly grac'd Pavilion view,
Where Majeſty reſides.
For him the Arts a deathleſs wreath entwine,
While round the throne ſhall bright-ey'd Science ſhine,
His awful brow inſpire the martial rage,
While Charlotte's ſofter ſmiles adorn a poliſh'd age.
---Aonian virgins! heavenly bland
View yonder claſſic band,
Your Britiſh Sons, all blooming youths and fair,
In garb of Rome, with hyacinthine hair,
Marſhall'd by Warton's ſkill, beneath his guardian care;

Claſſic Band] The Wincheſter Scholars, dreſſed in their gowns and caps.

His mental eye may view mid theſe,
Some future Tully or Demoſthenes,
Some youthful Virgil lie conceal'd,
Or Lyric Horace unreveal'd.

---Rapt of erſt with FANCY's heavenly fire,
Why, Warton, ſleeps thy tuneful lyre?
Would'ſt thou but deign of arms to ſing,
And touch but once th' heroic ſtring,
Ardour divine would kindle round,
" And Men grow Heroes at the ſound.")

This Stanza added at the time of the Royal Review at Wincheſter.

XVIII.

From hardy Regions of the North,
Fierce Caledonia's Sons pour forth;

The

Fancy's fire] Alluding to Dr. Warton's beautiful Ode to Fancy.

The plaided troop the target wield,
With thundering footſteps ſhake the field,
While, like the lightening, (from impulſe divine,)
Their glittering broad ſwords flaſh and ſhine.
---Glory her courſe unbounded runs,
And fires Damnonia's diſtant ſons,
The " ſpirit-ſtirring drum" alarms,
And Acland leads the youth in arms ;
*(With glory, for a while no more, alas ! they burn,
Their Leader loſt, the drooping Squadrons mourn,
A ſlow and melancholy train
With arms inverted, o'er the plain !
O Muſe of glory ! ſhed the godlike tear
To grace heroic Acland's funeral bier.)

From

Damnonia's Sons] Damnonia, the antient name of Devonſhire.

Acland leads] John Dyke Acland, Eſq; (the eldeſt Son of Sir Thomas Acland, Bart. of Pixton) Colonel of the firſt Battalion of Devonſhire Militia, one of the beſt diſciplined Provincial Regiments in the Kingdon. * Added on Colonel Acland's Death.

---From Cambria's Muſe-deſerted fountains,
From her bleak ſky-bounded mountains,
Their kindred country to defend.
Britain's antient race deſcend;
Glamorgan's warriors quit their native Land,
Gallant Mountſtuart heads the band;
The fiery youth he ſcarce reſtrains
(Tumultuous ardor in their veins)
Eager to prove their force on England's warlike plains:
Each Hero emulates his ſire,
The nation glows with martial ire:
With Cadwall's native rage, and bold Llewellin's fire!
On every heath, on every ſtrand,
Embattled Legions grace the Land:
To Arms---the hollow vallies ſound,
To Arms---to Arms---the hills rebound
Eccho, well-pleas'd, repeats the voice around.

XIX.

Muſe of Glory! ceaſe thy Strain,
Muſe of Melancholly reign,
For one ſhort penſive hour:
Genius of Britain! 'mid thy power,
With head declin'd, in anguiſh mourn
O'er Chatham's patriot Urn.
Immortal Chatham! from thy tongue
Demoſthenean accents hung,
While, with applauſe, the liſtening Senate rung;
Who now that Senate ſhall controul,
And flaſh conviction on the ſoul?
Combine with eloquence the Patriot flame.
And ſpread o'er every Shore thy Country's fame?

Oh! to thy Country ever dear!
Thy Spirit let our Souls revere!
Thy Vigour in our Hearts infuſe!
Our Troops inſpire---inſpire the Muſe!
Secure within our happy Iſle,
Bid us at vain Invaſion ſmile:
---Our Fleets triumphant o'er the Main,
Old Ocean's Empire ſtill maintain:
---Keppel's Imperial Flag advance
And point his thunder 'gainſt the coaſt of France,
(Wide as the waters flow
Keep the Subject waves in awe)
Make Britain's Naval Terrors known
And Lewis tremble on his ſplendid throne.

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